

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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DECLARATION OF MR. ROLAND THOMPSON

Dear Sir:

I, the undersigned Roland Thompson, an American citizen with an office at 5 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, Pennsylvania, USA, hereby declare and state that:

Background

1. I am a co-founder of the company Frontline Placement Technologies, Inc. (hereafter "Frontline"), and currently serve as a Managing Partner for the company. Frontline is the assignee for the present application.

2. Michael Blackstone and I conceived of the idea of a Web based substitute fulfillment system and founded Frontline Data, Inc., later renamed Frontline Placement Technologies, Inc., in 1998. We now have 65 employees, and provide substitute fulfillment services for over 1700 school districts in 47 states. We also provide shift fulfillment for manufacturing operations for a number of companies using Web fulfillment. I was the concept designer for the software for the automated substitute fulfillment system for Frontline Placement Technologies, Inc.

3. In 1996 I co-founded Thompson & Blackstone, Inc., a technical services and business company thinktank.

4. I was the co-founder and CEO of CF InFlight, LLP, which introduced Skycam (www.skycam.tv) to the sports broadcasting world. As the chief designer of the software for Skycam and chief executive, I brought Skycam to its present status, where it is featured on many of the worlds premier sports broadcasts including ESPN NFL broadcasts and several Super Bowls.

5. Prior to these ventures, I spent 10 years building an information technology services organization, Cone Software, focused on delivering IT services and software for stock and currency trading applications and developing mobile technology solutions for Fortune 500 companies. In that company, I designed and supervised the design of software for multiple platforms and for multiple applications.

6. I received a B.S. degree in computer science from West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

7. I am familiar with the claims and specification of the present patent application.

Meaning of the term “immediate response” and “immediately removing” in the Claim Element:

the one or more computers configured for automatically assigning the new open position only to one of the one or more preferred workers during a specified time period, in *immediate response* to receipt of an electronic selection of the new open position from one of the one or more preferred workers and *immediately removing* the position as an available for selection open position;

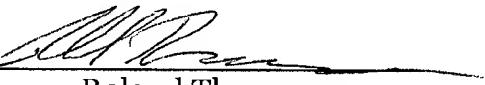
the one or more computers configured for assigning the new open position, after the expiration of the specified time period, to one of the qualified workers for which the new open position is made available for selection in *immediate response* to receipt of an electronic selection of the new open position from that qualified worker.

8. One of ordinary skill in the information technology art would understand that the use of the word “*immediate response*” in the above-recited claim element means that the system, comprising the one or more computers, starts a transaction to fulfill the position on receipt of the acceptance. The transaction may comprise, as one of ordinary skill would be aware, multiple different operations including one or more accesses to a database. No other worker acceptance subsequently received can jump ahead or override this transaction. In this respect, see the discussion of the term transaction in the “Sybase SQL Server Transact-SQL User’s Guide,” Release 11.0, last revised December 15, 1995, which is attached as an Exhibit to this Declaration. Note that this does not require that the posting on the respective web pages immediately be removed. But it does mean that it is no longer possible for another worker to accept the position. This would be clear to one or ordinary skill in the art.

9. I hereby declare that all statements made herein, unless otherwise indicated, are of my own knowledge and are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18

U.S.C. § 1001, and that such willful false statements can jeopardize the validity of any patent issuing from the captioned application or claiming the benefit of its priority.

Dated: 7/21, 2009
Malvern, PA

Signed by: 
Roland Thompson
Managing Partner, Frontline Placement Technologies, Inc.

Sybase SQL Server™
Transact-SQL® User's Guide

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Glossary

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17

Transactions: Maintaining Data Consistency and Recovery

Transactions provide a way to group Transact-SQL statements so that they are treated as a unit. Either all statements in the group are executed or no statements are executed.

This chapter discusses:

- An overview of transactions
- How to use group statements in a transaction
- How to define transaction modes and isolation levels
- How stored procedures and triggers work with transactions
- How cursors work with transactions
- Backup and recovery of transactions

What Are Transactions?

A transaction is a mechanism for ensuring that a set of one or more SQL statements is treated as a single unit of work. SQL Server automatically manages all data modification commands, including single-step change requests, as transactions. By default, each **insert**, **update**, and **delete** statement is considered a single transaction.

You can group a set of SQL statements into a user-defined transaction with the **begin transaction**, **commit transaction**, and **rollback transaction** commands. **begin transaction** marks the beginning of a transaction block. All subsequent statements, up to a **rollback transaction** or a matching **commit transaction**, are included as part of the transaction.

Transactions allow SQL Server to guarantee:

- Consistency – Simultaneous queries and change requests cannot collide with each other, and users never see or operate on data that is part way through a change.
- Recovery – In case of system failure, database recovery is complete and automatic.

To support SQL standards-compliant transactions, SQL Server provides options that allow you to select the mode and isolation level for your transactions. Applications that require SQL standards-compliant transactions should set those options at the beginning of

every session. Transaction modes and isolation levels are described later in this chapter.

Transactions and Consistency

In a multiuser environment, SQL Server must prevent simultaneous queries and data modification requests from interfering with each other. This is important because if the data being processed by a query could be changed by another user's update while the query runs, the results of the query would be ambiguous.

SQL Server automatically sets the appropriate level of locking for each transaction. You can make shared locks more restrictive on a query-by-query basis by including the **holdlock** keyword in a **select** statement.

User-defined transactions allow users to instruct SQL Server to process any number of SQL statements as a single unit. They are discussed in a later section.

Transactions and Recovery

A transaction is both a unit of work and a unit of recovery. The fact that SQL Server handles single-step change requests as transactions means that the database can be recovered completely in case of failures.

SQL Server's recovery time is measured in seconds and minutes. You can specify the maximum acceptable recovery time.

The SQL commands related to recovery and backup are discussed in "Backup and Recovery of Transactions" on page 17-21.

Using Transactions

begin transaction and **commit transaction** tell SQL Server to process any number of single commands as a single unit. **rollback transaction** undoes the transaction, either back to its beginning, or back to a savepoint. You define a **savepoint** inside a transaction with the **save transaction** command.

User-defined transactions give you control over transaction management. They also improve performance, since system overhead is incurred once per transaction, rather than once for each individual command.

► Note

Grouping large numbers of Transact-SQL commands into one long-running transaction may affect recovery time. If SQL Server fails before the transaction commits, recovery is longer, because SQL Server must undo the transaction.

Any user can define a transaction. No permission is required for any of the transaction commands.

The following sections discuss general transaction topics and transaction commands, with examples. For more information about transactions, see the *SQL Server Reference Manual*.

Allowing Data Definition Commands in Transactions

You can use certain data definition language commands in transactions by setting `sp_dboption`'s `ddl in tran` option to true. If `ddl in tran` is true in a particular database, you can issue commands such as `create table`, `grant`, and `alter table` inside transactions in that database. If `ddl in tran` is true in the *model* database, you can issue the commands inside transactions in all databases created after `ddl in tran` was set to true in *model*.

◆ WARNING!

The only scenario in which using data definition language commands inside transactions is justified is in create schema. Data definition language commands hold locks on system tables such as `sysobjects`. If you use data definition language commands inside transactions, keep the transactions short.

In particular, avoid using any data definition language commands on `tempdb` within transactions, lest your system grind to a halt. Always leave `ddl in tran` set to false in `tempdb`.

To set `ddl in tran` to true, type:

```
sp_dboption mydb,"ddl in tran", true
```

The first parameter specifies the name of the database in which to set the option. You must be using the *master* database to execute `sp_dboption`. Any user can execute `sp_dboption` with no parameters to

display the current option settings. To set options, however, you must be either a System Administrator or the Database Owner.

The following commands are allowed inside a user-defined transaction only if the **ddl in tran** option to **sp_dboption** is set to true:

Table 17-1: DDL commands allowed in transactions

alter table (clauses other than partition and unpartition are allowed)	create default create index create procedure create rule create schema create table create trigger create view	drop default drop index drop procedure drop rule drop table drop trigger drop view	grant revoke
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------

System procedures that change the *master* database or create temporary tables cannot be used inside user-defined transactions.

Never use the following commands inside a user-defined transaction:

Table 17-2: DDL commands not allowed in transactions

alter database	disk init	load transaction	select into
alter table...partition	dump database	load database	update statistics
alter table...unpartition	dump transaction	reconfigure	truncate table

You can check the current setting of **ddl in tran** with **sp_helpdb**.

Beginning and Committing Transactions

The **begin transaction** and **commit transaction** commands can enclose any number of SQL statements and stored procedures. The syntax for both statements is:

```
begin {transaction | tran} [transaction_name]
commit {transaction | tran | work} [transaction_name]
transaction_name is the name assigned to the transaction. It must conform to the rules for identifiers.
```

The keywords **transaction**, **tran**, and **work** (in **commit transaction**) are synonymous; you can use one in the place of the others. However,

transaction and **tran** are Transact-SQL extensions; only **work** is SQL standards-compliant.

Here is a skeletal example:

```
begin tran
    statement
    procedure
    statement
    commit tran
```

commit transaction does not affect SQL Server if a transaction is not currently active.

Rolling Back and Saving Transactions

If a transaction must be canceled before it is committed—either because of some failure or because of a change by the user—all of its completed statements or procedures must be undone.

You can cancel or roll back a transaction with the **rollback transaction** command at any time before the **commit transaction** command has been given. Using savepoints, you can cancel either an entire transaction or part of it. However, you cannot cancel a transaction after it has been committed.

The syntax of the **rollback transaction** command is:

```
rollback {transaction | tran | work}
    [transaction_name | savepoint_name]
```

A **savepoint** is a marker that the user puts inside a transaction to indicate a point to which it can be rolled back.

Savepoints are inserted by putting a **save transaction** command within the transaction. The syntax is:

```
save {transaction | tran} savepoint_name
```

The savepoint name must conform to the rules for identifiers.

If no **savepoint_name** or **transaction_name** is given with the **rollback transaction** command, the transaction is rolled back to the first **begin transaction** in a batch.

Here is how you can use the **save transaction** and **rollback transaction** commands:

```

begin tran transaction_name
  statement
  statement
  procedure
  save tran savepoint_name
  statement
  rollback tran savepoint_name
  statement
  statement
  rollback tran

```

The first **rollback transaction** command rolls the transaction back to the savepoint inside the transaction. The second **rollback transaction** rolls the transaction back to its beginning. If a transaction is rolled back to a savepoint, it must still proceed to completion or else be canceled altogether.

Until you issue a **commit transaction**, SQL Server considers all subsequent statements to be part of the transaction, unless it encounters another **begin transaction** statement. At that point, SQL Server considers all subsequent statements to be part of this new nested transaction. Nested transactions are described in the next section.

rollback transaction or **save transaction** does not affect SQL Server and does not return an error message if a transaction is not currently active.

Checking the State of Transactions

The global variable `@@transtate` keeps track of the current state of a transaction. SQL Server determines what state to return by keeping track of any transaction changes after a statement executes. `@@transtate` may contain the following values:

Table 17-3: `@@transtate` values

Value	Meaning
0	Transaction in progress. An explicit or implicit transaction is in effect; the previous statement executed successfully.
1	Transaction succeeded. The transaction completed and committed its changes.
2	Statement aborted. The previous statement was aborted; no effect on the transaction.
3	Transaction aborted. The transaction aborted and rolled back any changes.

In a transaction, you can use `@@transtate` after a statement (such as an `insert`) to determine whether it was successful or aborted, and to determine its effect on the transaction. The following example checks `@@transtate` during a transaction (after a successful `insert`) and after the transaction commits:

```
begin transaction

insert into publishers (pub_id) values ('9999')
(1 row affected)
select @@transtate
-----
0

(1 row affected)
commit transaction

select @@transtate
-----
1

(1 row affected)
```

This next example checks `@@transtate` after an unsuccessful `insert` (due to a rule violation) and after the transaction rolls back:

```
begin transaction

insert into publishers (pub_id) values ('7777')
Msg 552, Level 16, State 1:
A column insert or update conflicts with a rule
bound to the column. The command is aborted. The
conflict occurred in database 'pubs2', table
'publishers', rule 'pub_idrule', column 'pub_id'.
select @@transtate
-----
2

(1 row affected)
rollback transaction
select @@transtate
```

3

(1 row affected)

Unlike `@@error`, however, SQL Server does not clear `@@transtate` after every statement. It changes `@@transtate` only in response to an action taken by a transaction.

Nested Transactions

You can nest transactions within other transactions. When you nest **begin transaction** and **commit transaction** statements, the outermost pair actually begin and commit the transaction. The inner pairs just keep track of the nesting level. SQL Server does not commit the transaction until the **commit transaction** that matches the outermost **begin transaction** is issued.

SQL Server provides a global variable, `@@trancount`, that keeps track of the current nesting level for transactions. An initial implicit or explicit **begin transaction** sets `@@trancount` to 1. Each subsequent **begin transaction** increments `@@trancount`, and a **commit transaction** decrements it. Firing a trigger also increments `@@trancount`, and the transaction begins with the statement that causes the trigger to fire. Nested transactions are not committed until `@@trancount` equals 0.

For example, the following nested groups of statements are not committed by SQL Server until the final **commit transaction**:

```
begin tran
    select @@trancount
    /* @@trancount = 1 */

begin tran
    select @@trancount
    /* @@trancount = 2 */

begin tran
    select @@trancount
    /* @@trancount = 3 */
commit tran

commit tran

commit tran
```

```
select @@trancount
/* @@ trancount = 0 */
```

When you nest a **rollback transaction** statement without including a transaction or savepoint name, it always rolls back to the outermost **begin transaction** statement and cancels the transaction.

Example of a User-Defined Transaction

This example shows how a user-defined transaction might be specified:

```
begin transaction royalty_change

/* A user sets out to change the royalty split */
/* for the two authors of The Gourmet Microwave. */
/* Since the database would be inconsistent */
/* between the two updates, they must be grouped */
/* into a transaction. */

update titleauthor
set royaltyper = 65
from titleauthor, titles
where royaltyper = 75
and titleauthor.title_id = titles.title_id
and title = "The Gourmet Microwave"

update titleauthor
set royaltyper = 35
from titleauthor, titles
where royaltyper = 25
and titleauthor.title_id = titles.title_id
and title = "The Gourmet Microwave"

save transaction percent_changed

/* After updating the royaltyper entries for */
/* the two authors, the user inserts the */
/* savepoint "percent_changed," and then checks */
/* to see how a 10 percent increase in the */
/* price would affect the authors' royalty */
/* earnings. */
```

```
update titles
set price = price * 1.1
where title = "The Gourmet Microwave"

select (price * royalty * total_sales) * royaltyper
from titles, titleauthor, roysched
where title = "The Gourmet Microwave"
and titles.title_id = titleauthor.title_id
and titles.title_id = roysched.title_id

rollback transaction percent_changed

/* The transaction rolls back to the savepoint */
/* with the rollback transaction command. */
/* Without a savepoint, it would roll back to */
/* the begin transaction. */

commit transaction
```

Selecting Transaction Mode and Isolation Level

SQL Server provides two options you can set to support SQL standard-compliant transactions. These options define the transaction mode and transaction isolation level. You should set these options at the beginning of every session that requires SQL standards-compliant transactions.

SQL Server supports the following transaction modes:

- The default mode, called **unchained** or Transact-SQL mode, requires explicit **begin transaction** statements paired with **commit transaction** or **rollback transaction** statements to complete the transaction.
- The SQL standards-compatible mode, called **chained** mode, implicitly begins a transaction before any data retrieval or modification statement. These statements include: **delete**, **insert**, **open**, **fetch**, **select**, and **update**. You must still explicitly end the transaction with **commit transaction** or **rollback transaction**.

You can set either mode using the **chained** option of the **set** command. However, you should not mix these transaction modes in your applications. The behavior of stored procedures and triggers can

vary depending on the mode, and you may require special action to run a procedure in one mode that was created in the other.

SQL Server supports the following transaction isolation levels:

- Level 0 – SQL Server ensures that data written by one transaction represents the actual data. This level prevents other transactions from writing over the same data until the transaction commits. The other transactions can still read the uncommitted data.
- Level 1 – SQL Server ensures that data read by one transaction represents the actual data, not the data in the process of another uncommitted transaction. This is the default isolation level supported by SQL Server.
- Level 3 – SQL Server ensures that data read by one transaction is valid until the end of that transaction. It supports this level through the **holdlock** keyword of the **select** statement which applies a read-lock on the specified data.

You can set the isolation level for your session using the **transaction isolation level** option of the **set** command. You can enforce the isolation level for just a query as opposed to using the **at isolation** clause of the **select** statement.

The following sections describe these options in more detail.

Choosing a Transaction Mode

The SQL standards require every SQL data-retrieval and data-modification statement to occur inside of a transaction. A transaction automatically starts with the first data-retrieval or data-modification statement after the start of a session or after the previous transaction commits or aborts. This is the chained transaction mode.

You can set this mode for your current session by turning on the **chained** option of the **set** statement. For example:

```
set chained on
```

However, you cannot execute the **set chained** command within a transaction. To return to the unchained transaction mode, set the **chained** option **off**. The default transaction mode is unchained.

In the chained transaction mode, SQL Server implicitly executes a **begin transaction** statement just before the following data retrieval or modification statements: **delete**, **insert**, **open**, **fetch**, **select**, and **update**. For example, the following group of statements produce different results depending on which mode you use:

```
insert into publishers
    values ('9999', null, null, null)
begin transaction
    delete from publishers where pub_id = '9999'
    rollback transaction
```

In unchained mode, the **rollback** affects only the **delete** statement, so *publishers* still contains the inserted row. In chained mode, the **insert** statement implicitly begins a transaction, and the **rollback** affects all statements up to the beginning of that transaction, including the **insert**.

Although chained mode implicitly begins transactions with data retrieval or modification statements, you can nest transactions only by explicitly using **begin transaction** statements. Once the first transaction implicitly begins, further data retrieval or modification statements no longer begin transactions until after the first transaction commits or aborts. For example, in the following query, the first **commit transaction** commits all changes in chained mode; the second commit is unnecessary:

```
insert into publishers
    values ('9999', null, null, null)
insert into publishers
    values ('9997', null, null, null)
commit transaction
commit transaction
```

► **Note**

In chained mode, a data retrieval or modification statement begins a transaction whether or not it executes successfully. Even a **select** that does not access a table begins a transaction.

You can check the global variable **@@tranchained** to determine SQL Server's current transaction mode. **select @@tranchained** returns a 0 for unchained mode or a 1 for chained mode.

Choosing an Isolation Level

The SQL92 standard defines four levels of isolation for transactions. Each isolation level specifies the kinds of actions that are not permitted while concurrent transactions are executing. Higher levels include the restrictions imposed by the lower levels:

- Level 0 prevents other transactions from changing data that has already been modified (through an **insert**, **delete**, **update**, and so on) by an uncommitted transaction. The other transactions are blocked from modifying that data until the transaction commits. However, other transactions can still read the uncommitted data, which results in **dirty reads**.
- Level 1 prevents dirty reads. Such reads occur when one transaction modifies a row, and then a second transaction reads that row before the first transaction commits the change. If the first transaction rolls back the change, the information read by the second transaction becomes invalid.
- Level 2 prevents **nonrepeatable reads**. Such reads occur when one transaction reads a row and a second transaction modifies that row. If the second transaction commits its change, subsequent reads by the first transaction yield different results than the original read.
- Level 3 prevents **phantoms**. Phantoms occur when one transaction reads a set of rows that satisfy a search condition, and then a second transaction modifies the data (through an **insert**, **delete**, **update**, and so on). If the first transaction repeats the read with the same search conditions, it obtains a different set of rows.

By default, SQL Server's transaction isolation level is 1. The SQL92 standard requires that level 3 be the default isolation for all transactions. This prevents dirty reads, nonrepeatable reads, and phantoms. To enforce this default level of isolation, Transact-SQL provides the **transaction isolation level 3** option of the **set** statement. This option instructs SQL Server to automatically apply a **holdlock** to all **select** operations in a transaction. For example:

```
set transaction isolation level 3
```

Applications that use **transaction isolation level 3** should set that isolation level at the beginning of each session. However, setting **transaction isolation level 3** causes SQL Server to hold any read-locks for the duration of the transaction. If you also use the chained transaction mode, that isolation level remains in effect for any data retrieval or modification statement that implicitly begins a transaction. In both cases, this can lead to concurrency problems for some applications, since more locks may be held for longer periods of time.

To return your session to the SQL Server default isolation level:

```
set transaction isolation level 1
```

Applications that are not impacted by dirty reads may see better concurrency and reduced deadlocks when accessing the same data

by setting **transaction isolation level 0** at the beginning of each session. An example is an application that finds the momentary average balance for all savings accounts stored in a table. Since it requires only a snapshot of the current average balance, which probably changes frequently in an active table, the application should query the table using isolation level 0. Other applications that require data consistency, such as deposits and withdrawals to specific accounts in the table, should avoid using isolation level 0.

Queries executing at isolation level 0 do not acquire any read locks for their scans, so they do not block other transactions from writing to the same data, and vice versa. However, even if you set your isolation level to 0, utilities (like **dbcc**) and data modification statements (like **update**) still acquire read locks for their scans, because they must maintain the database integrity by ensuring that the correct data has been read before modifying it.

The global variable **@@isolation** contains the current isolation level of your Transact-SQL session. Querying **@@isolation** returns the value of the active level (0, 1, or 3). For example:

```
select @@isolation
-----
1
(1 row affected)
```

For more information about isolation levels and locking, see the *Performance and Tuning Guide*.

Changing the Isolation Level for a Query

You can change the isolation level for a query by using the **at isolation** clause with the **select** or **readtext** statements. The **read uncommitted**, **read committed**, and **serializable** options of **at isolation** represent each isolation level as defined below:

at isolation Option	Isolation Level
read uncommitted	0
read committed	1
serializable	3

For example, the following two statements query the same table at isolation levels 0 and 3, respectively:

```

select *
from titles
at isolation read uncommitted

select *
from titles
at isolation serializable

```

The **at isolation** clause is valid only for single **select** and **readtext** queries or in the **declare cursor** statement. SQL Server returns a syntax error if you use **at isolation** as follows:

- With a query using the **into** clause
- Within a subquery
- With a query in the **create view** statement
- With a query in the **insert** statement
- With a query using the **for browse** clause

If there is a **union** operator in the query, you must specify the **at isolation** clause after the last **select**.

The SQL92 standard defines **read uncommitted**, **read committed**, and **serializable** as options for **at isolation** (and **set transaction isolation level** as well). A Transact-SQL extension also allows you to specify 0, 1, or 3 for **at isolation**. To simplify the discussion of isolation levels, the **at isolation** examples in this manual do not use this extension.

You can also enforce isolation level 3 using the **holdlock** keyword of the **select** statement. However, you cannot specify **holdlock**, **noholdlock**, or **shared** in a query that also specifies **at isolation read uncommitted**. When you use different ways to set an isolation level, the **holdlock** keyword takes precedence over the **at isolation** clause (except for isolation level 0), and **at isolation** takes precedence over the session level defined by **set transaction isolation level**.

Cursors and Isolation Levels

You can use the **select** statement's **at isolation** clause to change the isolation level with a cursor. For example:

```

declare commit_csr cursor
for select *
from titles
at isolation read committed

```

This statement makes the cursor operate at isolation level 1, regardless of the isolation level of the transaction or session. If you declare a cursor at isolation level 0 (**read uncommitted**), SQL Server also

defines the cursor as read-only. You cannot specify the **for update** clause along with **at isolation read uncommitted** in a **declare cursor** statement.

SQL Server decides a cursor's isolation level when you open it, not when it is declared. Once you open the cursor, SQL Server determines its isolation level based on the following:

- If the cursor was declared with the **at isolation** clause, that isolation level overrides the transaction isolation level in which it is opened.
- If the cursor was **not** declared with **at isolation**, the cursor uses the isolation level in which it is opened. If you close the cursor and reopen it later, the cursor acquires the current isolation level of the transaction.

The caveat to the last point is that certain types of cursors (language and client) declared in a transaction with isolation level 1 or 3 cannot be opened in a transaction with isolation level 0. For more information about this restriction and about the different types of cursors, see the *SQL Server Reference Manual*.

Stored Procedures and Isolation Levels

The Sybase system-stored procedures always operate at isolation level 1, regardless of the transaction or session isolation level. User stored procedures operate at the isolation level of the transaction that executes it. If the isolation level changes within a stored procedure, the new isolation level remains in effect only during the execution of the stored procedure.

Triggers and Isolation Levels

Since triggers are fired by data modification statements (like **insert**), all triggers execute at either the transaction's isolation level or isolation level 1, whichever is higher. So, if a trigger fires in a transaction at level 0, SQL Server sets the trigger's isolation level to 1 before executing its first statement.

Using Transactions in Stored Procedures and Triggers

You can use transactions in stored procedures and triggers just as with statement batches. If a transaction in a batch or stored procedure invokes another stored procedure or trigger containing a transaction, that second transaction is nested into the first one.

The first explicit or implicit (using chained mode) **begin transaction** starts the transaction in the batch, stored procedure, or trigger. Each subsequent **begin transaction** increments the nesting level. Each subsequent **commit transaction** decrements the nesting level until it reaches 0. SQL Server then commits the entire transaction. A **rollback transaction** aborts the entire transaction up to the first **begin transaction** regardless of the nesting level or the number of stored procedures and triggers it spans.

In stored procedures and triggers, the number of **begin transaction** statements must match the number of **commit transaction** statements. This also applies to stored procedures that use chained mode. The first statement that implicitly begins a transaction must also have a matching **commit transaction**.

The following illustration demonstrates what can happen when you nest transaction statements within stored procedures:

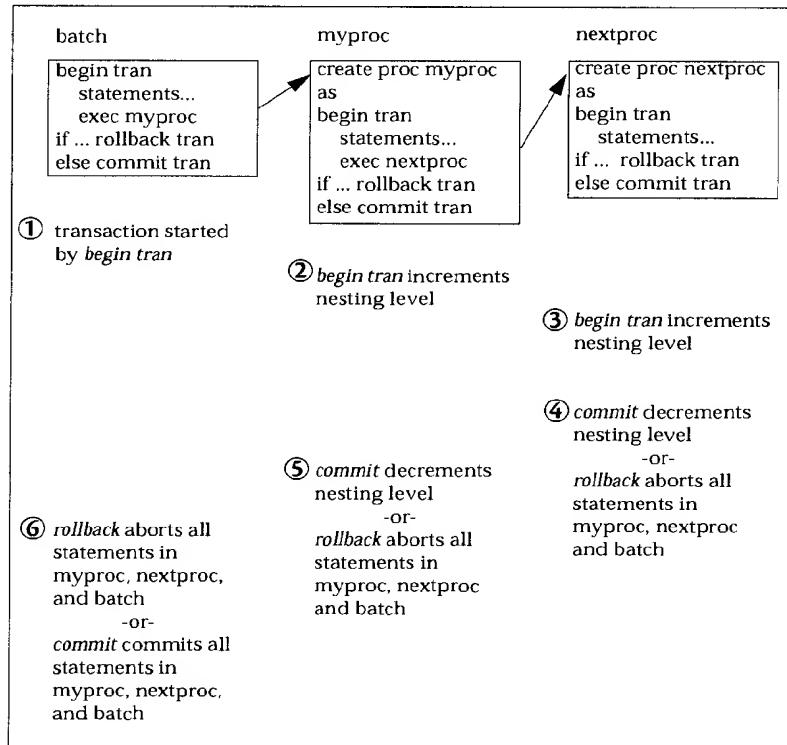


Figure 17-1: Nesting transaction statements

rollback transaction statements in stored procedures do not affect subsequent statements in the procedure or batch that originally called the procedure. SQL Server executes subsequent statements in the stored procedure or batch. However, **rollback transaction** statements in triggers do abort the batch so that subsequent statements are not executed.

For example, the following batch calls the stored procedure *myproc* which includes a **rollback transaction** statement:

```
begin tran
update titles set ...
insert into titles ...
execute myproc
delete titles where ...
```

The **update** and **insert** statements are rolled back and the transaction is aborted. SQL Server continues the batch and executes the **delete** statement. However, if there is an **insert** trigger on a table that includes a **rollback transaction**, the entire batch is aborted and the **delete** is not executed. For example:

```
begin tran
update authors set ...
insert into authors ...
delete authors where ...
```

Different transaction modes or isolation levels for stored procedures have certain requirements, which are described in the next section. Triggers are not affected by the current transaction mode since they are always called as part of a data modification statement.

Transaction Modes and Stored Procedures

Stored procedures written to use the unchained transaction mode may be incompatible with other transactions using chained mode, and vice versa. For example, following is a valid stored procedure using chained transaction mode:

```
create proc myproc
as
insert into publishers
values ('9999', null, null, null)
commit work
```

A program using unchained transaction mode would fail if it called this procedure because the **commit** does not have a corresponding **begin**. You may encounter other problems:

- Applications that start a transaction using chained mode may create impossibly long transactions, or may hold data locks for the entire length of their session. This behavior degrades SQL Server performance.
- Applications may nest transactions at unexpected times. This can produce different results depending on the transaction mode.

As a rule, applications using one transaction mode should call stored procedures written to use that same mode. The exceptions to that

rule are Sybase system-stored procedures (not including **sp_procxmode**, described below), which can be invoked by sessions using any transaction mode. If no transaction is active when you execute a system-stored procedure, SQL Server turns off chained mode for the duration of the procedure. Before returning, it resets the mode its original setting.

SQL Server tags all procedures with the transaction mode ("chained" or "unchained") of the session in which they are created. This helps avoid problems associated with transactions using one mode invoking other transactions using the other mode. A stored procedure tagged as "chained" is not executable in sessions using unchained transaction mode, and vice versa.

◆ **WARNING!**

When using transaction modes, be aware of the effects each setting can have on your applications.

Setting Transaction Modes for Stored Procedures

You can use the **sp_procxmode** system stored procedure to change the tag value associated with a stored procedure. SQL Server also provides a third tag, "anymode", which you can use with **sp_procxmode** to indicate stored procedures that can run under either transaction mode. For example:

```
sp_procxmode byroyalty, "anymode"
```

Use **sp_procxmode** without any parameter values to get the transaction modes for all stored procedures in the current database:

sp_procxmode	procedure name	transaction mode
	-----	-----
	byroyalty	Unchained
	discount_proc	Unchained
	insert_sales_proc	Unchained
	insert_salesdetail_proc	Unchained
	storeid_proc	Unchained
	storename_proc	Unchained
	title_proc	Unchained
	titleid_proc	Unchained

(8 rows affected, return status = 0)

You can use **sp_proxmode** only in unchained transaction mode.

To change a procedure's transaction mode, you must be a System Administrator, the Database Owner, or the owner of the procedure.

Using Cursors in Transactions

By default, SQL Server does not change a cursor's state (open or closed) when a transaction ends through a commit or roll back. The SQL standards, however, associate an open cursor with its active transaction. Committing or rolling back that transaction automatically closes any open cursors associated with it.

To enforce this SQL standards-compliant behavior, SQL Server provides the **close on endtran** option of the **set** command. In addition, if you set chained mode on, SQL Server starts a transaction when you open a cursor, and it closes that cursor when the transaction is committed or rolled back.

For example, the following sequence of statements produces an error by default:

```
open cursor test
commit tran
open cursor test
```

If you set either the **close on endtran** or **chained** options, the cursor's state changes from open to closed after the commit. This allows the cursor to be reopened.

Any exclusive locks acquired by a cursor in a transaction are held until the end of that transaction. This also applies to shared locks when using the **holdlock** keyword, the **at isolation serializable** clause, or the **set isolation level 3** option. However, if you do not set the **close on endtran** option, the cursor remains open past the end of the transaction, and its current page lock remains in effect. It could also continue to acquire locks as it fetches additional rows.

Backup and Recovery of Transactions

Every change to the database, whether it is the result of a single **update** statement or a grouped set of SQL statements, is automatically recorded in the system table *syslogs*. This table is called the **transaction log**.

Some commands that change the database are not logged, such as **truncate table**, bulk copy into a table that has no indexes, **select into**, **writetext** and **dump transaction with no_log**.

The transaction log records **update**, **insert**, or **delete** statements on a moment-to-moment basis. When a transaction begins, a **begin transaction** event is recorded in the log. As each data modification statement is received, it is recorded in the log.

The change is always recorded in the log before any change is made in the database itself. This type of log, called a write-ahead log, ensures that the database can be recovered completely in case of a failure.

Failures can be due to hardware or media problems, system software problems, application software problems, program-directed cancellations of transactions, or user decisions to cancel a transaction.

In case of any of these failures, the transaction log can be played back against a copy of the database restored from a backup made with the **dump** commands.

To recover from a failure, transactions that were in progress but not yet committed at the time of the failure must be undone, because a partial transaction is not an accurate change. Completed transactions must be redone if there is no guarantee that they have been written to the database device.

If there are active, long-running transactions that are not committed when SQL Server fails, undoing the changes may require as much time as the transaction has been running. Such cases include transactions that do not contain a **commit transaction** or **rollback transaction** to match a **begin transaction**. This prevents SQL Server from writing any changes and increases recovery time.

SQL Server's dynamic dump allows the database and transaction log to be backed up while use of the database continues. Make frequent backups of your database transaction log. The more often you back up your data, the less work will be lost if a system failure occurs.

The owner of each database or a user with OPER authorization is responsible for backing up the database and its transaction log with the **dump** commands, though permission to execute them can be transferred to other users. Permission to use the **load** commands, however, defaults to the Database Owner and cannot be transferred.

Once the appropriate **load** commands are issued, SQL Server handles all aspects of the recovery process. SQL Server also automatically

controls the checkpoint interval, which is the point at which all data pages that have been changed are guaranteed to have been written to the database device. Users can force a checkpoint if necessary with the **checkpoint** command.

For more information, see the *SQL Server Reference Manual* and the *System Administration Guide*.

